



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
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MINUTES  
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
September 9, 2015

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Morgan Devlin  
Mr. Mohamad Farzan, AIA  
Ms. Caitlin Greeley, Statewide Planning, representing Kevin Flynn  
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board  
Ms. Lisa Lee representing Janet Coit, Director DEM  
Dr. Patrick Malone  
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon  
Dr. Ronald Onorato  
Mr. Pieter N. Roos  
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Ms. Ruth Taylor

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian  
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Deputy Director  
Ms. Virginia Hesse, Principal Historical Architect  
Dr. Timothy Ives, Principal Archaeologist  
Ms. Michaela Jergensen, Senior Reviewer RIDOT Projects  
Ms. Katherine Jurczyk, Senior Grants Coordinator  
Mr. Glenn Modica, Senior Project Review Coordinator  
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator  
Ms. Elizabeth Warburton, Senior Architectural Historian

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA  
Mr. Al Cocce, AIA, representing John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner  
Ms. Janet Coit, Director DEM  
Mr. Darin Early, COO, Commerce RI  
Mr. Karst Hoozeboom, Chairman  
Mr. Clark Schoettle

GUESTS

Mr. Richard Youngken, National Register Consultant

## II. AGENDA

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M., Dr. Onorato presiding in the absence of Chairman Hoogeboom.

### 2. Minutes of July 8, 2015

On a motion by Mr. Farzan, seconded by Ms. Lee, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the Minutes of July 8, 2015.

### 3. Executive Director's Report

a) Mr. Sanderson recognized Lisa Lee, Principal Civil Engineer at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. Ms. Lee represents DEM Director Janet Coit on the RIHPHC Commission.

b) Mr. Sanderson introduced two recent appointments to the RIHPHC staff.

Glenn Modica, from Trenton, NJ, has an undergraduate degree in American history from Northwestern University and a Master's Degree in American History and Architectural History from The City College of New York. He has over sixteen years of professional experience working in the field of historic preservation, including architectural surveys to identify and document a range of historic properties using fieldwork and archival research, preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, and extensive experience carrying out federal Section 106 project reviews. In addition, Mr. Modica has experience working on local historic preservation planning, and he has experience working with computer databases and Geographic Information Systems.

Elizabeth Warburton, from Portsmouth, RI, has an undergraduate degree in Anthropology from Rhode Island College and a Master's Degree in Historic Preservation from The University of Vermont. She has three years of professional experience working in the field of historic preservation, including architectural surveys to identify and document historic properties using fieldwork and archival research and preparation of National Register of Historic Places nomination forms. She also has experience working with nonprofit historic preservation organizations and historic sites and has experience at the Preservation Society of Newport County inventorying and cataloguing historical artifacts using computer databases.

With these two appointments, the RIHPHC staff is back at full strength after several years of

filling vacancies.

c) Written comments from the Executive Director to Commerce RI regarding regulations for Governor Raimondo's "Rebuild RI Tax Credit," "Main Street Projects Fund," and "Tax Increment Financing" were distributed.

d) Ms. Hesse reported on construction work at The Old State House. Geothermal wells have been dug; the basement boiler room has been reconstructed and new heating and cooling equipment has been installed; steam radiators have been removed throughout the building and new fan coil heating and cooling units have been installed; and an underground electrical transformer vault has been constructed under the Benefit Street sidewalk. The system should be turned on in the next few weeks, and final clean-up of the entire building will follow. Future phases of work include a new wood shingle roof and window sash repairs (2016) and interior repairs and painting (2017).

e) Dr. Ives reported on Rhode Island Archaeology Month, October 2015.

#### 4. 2016 Certified Local Government Grant Selection Criteria

Criteria for 2016 Certified Local Government grants selection were distributed. The recommended criteria for 2016 are unchanged from 2015. On a motion by Mr. Farzan, seconded by Ms. Lee, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the 2016 CLG criteria:

#### 2016 CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS Funding Priorities and Selection Criteria

##### ELIGIBLE CLG PROJECTS

Applications may be submitted for projects which provide for the identification and evaluation, planning and protection, and public awareness of properties and sites listed in or considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Eligible properties include individual sites and buildings, historic districts and buildings which are considered contributing elements of a historic district.

##### FY 2016 FUNDING PRIORITIES

The RIHPHC will receive applications for CLG grants in the subject areas listed below. The RIHPHC will evaluate all applications received and will give special attention to those which address important preservation needs within the applicant community or to a statewide preservation need. The State Historic Preservation Plan adopted by the RIHPHC and the historic preservation element in local community comprehensive plans will provide the context for evaluating project applications. Special consideration will be given to those projects which

address the needs of an endangered property or properties which have extraordinary significance.

#### Statewide Projects

1. annual statewide historic preservation conference
2. training sessions for members of local historic district commissions
3. other activities which address a statewide preservation need

#### Identification/evaluation of Historic Resources

1. surveys, especially of resources not yet evaluated, such as underwater wrecks, or whose documentation does not meet current standards
2. preparation of National Register nominations
3. data management such as creating or updating databases or GIS systems

#### Planning Activities

1. preparation of the preservation component of a community comprehensive plan
2. any preservation activity identified in a community's comprehensive plan as necessary
3. preparation of ordinance drafts, rules, etc.

#### Public Education Activities

1. documents in print and electronic media related to the operation of historic district zoning, such as brochures, standards, guidelines
2. other print or electronic documents, such as walking tours, surveys, etc.
3. signage, such as wayfinding signs for historic districts, plaques, etc.
4. curriculum development, docent training, etc. for historic properties and places

#### Resource-specific Activities

1. architectural and engineering plans and specifications
2. engineering reports
2. feasibility studies
3. historic structures reports and cultural landscapes reports

### PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The RIHPHC will score and rank grant applications and award grants based on the above funding priorities and project selection criteria as follows:

**National Register Significance:** This criterion rates relative architectural and historical significance of properties affected by the project activity. Projects involving properties which are eligible or recommended for listing on the National Register receive priority. Rare, unique, or key landmarks merit special consideration.

**Project Need:** This criterion rates the need and importance of the proposed project. Projects are encouraged which are an appropriate step in the development of the particular local historic preservation program. Projects involving issues identified in the Commission's comprehensive planning process, projects addressing historical resources with special needs, and projects which further local planning efforts are preferred.

**Project Impact:** This criterion rates the extent to which the public may directly benefit from the project. Projects with broader or statewide impact rank higher than those with local impact. Applications for seed money which can lead to a larger or multi-phase project may have greater impact than a more limited project.

Other factors considered include geographic distribution of grants awarded throughout the state; priority consideration to cities and towns which have approved affordable housing plans; administrative capacity to successfully carry out a grant project, including previous experience in managing grants; and projects which match federal grant funds with cash matching share are encouraged.

The ability to meet general program requirements is also considered including compliance with applicable federal regulations, and presenting a scope of work which can be accomplished within the allotted time framework.

## 5. National Register of Historic Places

### a) Final Presentation: Ram Point, 77 Watch Hill Road, Westerly

Ms. Doherty presented information about the nomination which was prepared by Richard Youngken. Ram Point is an intact and commodious, early-20<sup>th</sup>-century summer estate in Westerly, Rhode Island, attributed to the noted Baltimore architect Douglas H. Thomas, Jr. The estate includes a Colonial Revival-style, wood-shingled residence with a number of appurtenances. The approximately 6-acre property occupies a peninsula, also known as Ram Point, which extends into the Pawcatuck River, the boundary between Westerly and Stonington, Connecticut. Ram Point is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture. Built ca. 1903, Ram Point is an excellent, intact example of a Colonial Revival-style summer estate, with a main house and several support structures, such as a boat house and dock, which convey the property's use as a seasonal retreat. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Rhode Island shore – including nearby Watch Hill (NR listed 1985) – became popular as a summer resort destination. At summer communities throughout New England, the Queen Anne, Shingle Style and Colonial Revival styles predominated. The main house at Ram Point, with its gambrel roof, symmetrical façade, wood-shingle siding, and ample porches, embodies the Colonial Revival style. The appurtenances, all built at the same time as the main house, are of

compatible design and materials. Together, Ram Point's main house and support structures present a well-preserved example of early-20<sup>th</sup>-century domestic resort architecture in Westerly.

Following discussion, on a motion by Mr. Roos, seconded by Dr. Morenon, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the nomination.

b) Preliminary Presentation: Jason Hilton Bleachery, Notte Park, North Providence

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property. The Town of North Providence has submitted an application for a State Preservation Grant for the building, and the RIHPHC needs to determine whether it appears to meet National Register eligibility criteria.

The James Hilton Bleachery is located in the Town of North Providence, east of Douglas Avenue and south of the Wenscott Reservoir on the West River. Constructed c. 1846-1866, the three-story, gable-roofed fieldstone structure is built into a hill, with the basement level exposed on the western and southern elevations. Water access is via a mill pond just north of the building, with water flowing through a culvert and alongside the western elevation. The primary entrance on the eastern gable-end is set back within a wide arched brick surround, mimicked on an access door on the floor above. A third door, with a simple stone lintel, on the basement level of the southern facade provides closer access to the river. Fenestration is symmetrically spaced on each façade, though several windows have been filled in with rubblestone, including the two on the primary eastern façade. In each case, the stone lintels were retained in keeping with the extant windows and the building's stone quoins. With the exception of a single surviving 2/1 wooden sash window on the basement level of the southern façade, all windows have been replaced with aluminum 1/1 frames. The structure has two chimneys, one of brick in the southwestern corner dating from the period of construction with a later extension and one of coursed ashlar centered on the northern façade dating to c. 1936.

The interior features an open floor plan on each level, with later subdivision of rooms in the basement. Because of a mid-twentieth-century fire, many of the interior finishes were replaced c. 1950. The main floor maintains its open character, but narrow-plank flooring and a twentieth-century fireplace have been added alongside florescent lighting and other modern improvements. The narrow-plank flooring of the upper story is suspended from the ceiling trusses with tie rods, harkening to the building's original usage as a factory building and allowing for the expansive open space on the floor below. Fire damage in the form of charred beams is visible in the eaves of this story as well as on the basement ceiling.

The James Hilton Bleachery was built c. 1846-1866 on the land of Otis N. Angell of North Providence. A mill was extant on the property by 1855, and a contemporary map shows an ice house nearby. In 1866, textile manufacturer Thomas Pray, Sr. of Killingly, CT purchased the

property and existing factory buildings from Angell and subsequently leased them to James Hilton, who operated a bleachery on the site from 1868-1872. At the conclusion of Hilton's lease, the property was sold to Thomas Pray's son-in-law, Henry Randall Hill of North Providence. Educated at Brown University, a member of the first town council of North Providence, and an overseer of the poor, Hill farmed on the property until his death in 1918. The property remained in the Hill family until 1922, when it was sold and later transitioned through various commercial uses in the 1920s and 1930s. By the mid-twentieth century, the property was used by the Geneva Sportsmen's Club as a lodge for fishing, hunting, and community activities. In 1986, the Town of North Providence purchased the property for continued use as a community building within the municipal Governor John Notte Memorial Park.

During discussion, Dr. Malone observed that textile finishing operations were an important part of Rhode Island's early textile industry. The state was noted for its small scale bleacheries, dye houses and other finishing operations. He also noted that a bleachery operation did not rely on water power but did require a reliable source of clean water for washing and finishing; rural locations like North Providence were more likely to provide clean water than an urban location.

Mr. Roos commented on the interior remodeling that has taken place. Dr. Onorato acknowledged the changes but thought the largely intact exterior still conveys the structure's historic character. Ms. Taylor expressed concern whether the building retains National Register significance and integrity. Commissioners Onorato, Farzan and Roos discussed the role and importance of small scale rural industrial development in the 1840s and 1850s as key to Rhode Island's emerging leadership in industrialization. Ms. Lee suggested that RIHPHC can have a role in shaping the future treatment of the bleachery.

On a motion by Dr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Farzan, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for the James Hilton Bleachery.

c) Preliminary Approval: Old Town House, 110 Boone Street, North Kingstown

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property. The Town of North Providence has submitted an application for a State Preservation Grant for the building, and the RIHPHC needs to determine whether it appears to meet National Register eligibility criteria.

This simple one-story building was constructed by William Holloway in 1806 on land given by Daniel and James Updike to serve as North Kingstown's first town house. Meetings were previously held in private homes. The building interior consists of a single large room with a domed ceiling and very simple wood trim. After it was replaced in 1889 by a larger and more stylish Town Hall, the Old Town House was used for by religious and fraternal groups and for storage. The building formerly was located at 136 West Main Street and was considered to contribute to the significance of the Wickford National Register Historic District. In the last

year, it was moved within the historic district to the grounds of the Wickford Elementary School where the Town hopes to preserve and restore the 1806 building. Following discussion, on a motion by Mr. Roos, seconded by Ms. Taylor, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for the Old Town House.

6. State Preservation Grants Report

Ms. Zurier reported that 35 State Preservation Grant applications were received for historic properties in 19 cities and towns. The total amount of grant funding requested is \$2.9 million. Approximately \$1.6 million is available for the current application round. Ms. Zurier described the review process by RIHPHC staff and by the SPG Grants Review Committee. Final funding recommendations will be presented for RIHPHC Commission approval in December 2015. The grant applications are available for Commissioner review.

7. Other Business: There was no other business.

8. Next regular meeting date: Wednesday October 14, 2015 at 9:30 AM.

9. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Minutes recorded by,



Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer